

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-21 without prejudice, and consider new claims 22-29, as follows:

1-21 (canceled)

22. (new) A hot melt adhesive composition having antimicrobial properties for skin contact applications comprising an acrylic polymer and an effective amount of a heat stable antimicrobial agent dispersed throughout said acrylic polymer.

23. (new) The hot melt adhesive of claim 22 wherein said acrylic polymer comprises a mixture of a low molecular weight solid acrylic polymer and a medium molecular weight solid acrylic polymer.

24. (new) The hot melt adhesive composition of claim 23, wherein said low molecular weight acrylic polymer has a molecular weight of between about 90,000 and about 120,000, and said medium molecular weight acrylic polymer has a molecular weight of between about 140,000 and about 160,000.

25. (new) The hot melt adhesive composition of claim 23, wherein the ratio of low molecular weight polymer to medium molecular weight polymer is about 1 to 4.

26. (new) The hot melt adhesive composition of claim 25, further

comprising an effective amount of a tackifier.

27. (new) The hot melt adhesive composition of claim 22 wherein said heat stable antimicrobial agent permits ethylene oxide sterilization of articles coated with said hot melt adhesive composition.

28. (new) The hot melt adhesive composition of claim 22 wherein said heat stable antimicrobial agent permits radiation sterilization of articles coated with said hot melt adhesive composition.

29. (new) A solventless adhesive composition comprising a heat stable antimicrobial agent dispersed in an acrylic polymer comprising a mixture of low and medium molecular weight solid acrylic polymers.